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## **Automation, AI & the Cloud: New study to scope transport and mobility sector jobs skills gaps and training needs**

The iMOVE Cooperative Research Centre and RMIT University will undertake a study to map emerging skills gaps and training needs in the highly technology-disrupted transport and mobility sector. The study will also include an examination of the impact of Covid-19 on sector skill needs.

The new study aims to give state and federal policymakers a clear roadmap on filling the skills gaps in the wide-ranging sector worth more than \$123 billion to the nation's GDP (7.3%).

The study will scope the future of work for more than 273,000 Australian workers in the heavily disrupted sector and assess what skills workers will need in the face of significant ongoing technology development and in resulting from Covid-19 pandemic.

It will look at the potential/impact of trends such as automation and artificial intelligence (AI), which are greatly impacting the transport sector, where new jobs are likely to be found now and into the future as things evolve and what skills these jobs will require.

iMOVE initiated the project after ongoing consultation with industry and government partners who highlighted concerns about technology-related gaps in particular. However the project will take a broad view of the nature of gaps across the whole industry,

iMove Managing Director Ian Christensen said: "This is a timely collaboration with RMIT. Understanding the fundamentals of skills and training needs for the transport and mobility sector in the face of ongoing technological transformation is critical. It also forms part of the solution for unlocking much needed growth for the national economic recovery post-Covid."

RMIT Associate Professors Victor Gekera and Darryn Snell are the lead academics.

Both have extensive experience in probing occupational change and skills development questions across a range of industries including agri-foods, digital, transport & logistics, cleantech and the electricity generation industry.

Gekera noted even before the pandemic struck the sector had long been associated with chronic skills and labour supply challenges, including difficulties with recruitment and retention of younger workers, an increasingly ageing workforce, and growing skills gaps. He explained

that the recent acceleration in advanced technology adoption brings in a totally new dimension to the skill challenges.

“So far, however, there has been no comprehensive national study to provide concrete evidence of the emerging skills gaps and their implications for training needs and possible policy responses for the entire sector,” Gekera said.

Snell said “there’s no question that Covid has shaken up the sector and it’s unlikely we will return to a pre-pandemic normal in the transport sector”.

“There has never been a greater impetus to get real local and global insights and understanding from industry stakeholders about what the future looks like for them – what technologies will drive change, what new skills will be needed, and what that will look like in terms of a policy response for gearing up training and education,” he added.

A preliminary report of skills gaps is expected by the end of this year with a follow up report outlining how this relates to training needs and international examples expected mid 2021.

RMIT Associate Professors Victor Gekera and Darryn Snell are available for interview.

More information on this project and how to get involved: <https://imoveaustralia.com/skills-gaps-training-needs/>

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### **ABOUT iMOVE**

iMOVE is the national centre for collaborative R&D in transport and mobility. It facilitates, supports and co-funds research projects that improve the way people and goods move in Australia. It has 44 industry, government and academic partners and has over 50 projects completed or currently underway in a broad range of transport areas.

Find out more about our work: [imoveaustralia.com](http://imoveaustralia.com)